

What is claimed is:

~~1. A method for establishing a remote agent station from a call center, comprising steps of:~~

- 5 (a) establishing a data link between a computer platform at the remote agent station and a CTI processor connected to a telephony switch at the call center;
- 10 (b) determining to switch a selected one of the incoming calls to an agent at the remote agent station;
- 15 (c) retrieving data associated with the selected incoming call from a database at the call center;
- 20 (d) forwarding the data associated with the selected incoming call to the computer platform at the remote agent station via the data link;
- 25 (e) placing a call from the call center to a telephone at the remote agent station; and
- 30 (f) switching the selected incoming call to the remote agent station.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the CTI processor at the call center and the computer platform at the remote agent station each have a modem connected by a telephony line to a telephony network, and in step (a) the data link is established by the computer platform dialing up the CTI processor through the telephony network.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein the telephony network is a publicly-switched telephony network..

25 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the CTI processor at the call center is adapted as an Internet server, and in step (a) the data link is established by the computer platform at the remote agent station dialing up an Internet service provider and establishing an Internet connection to the CTI processor.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein, in step (e), the data forwarded is displayed as a screen pop on a video display connected to the computer platform at the remote agent station.

5 6. The method of claim 5 wherein the screen pop includes a script for the agent at the remote agent station.

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10 7. The method of claim 1 wherein first control routines executing at the CTI processor and second control routines executing at the computer platform at the remote agent station are adapted to cooperate over the data link to provide call center services to the agent at the remote agent station.

15 8. A method for establishing a remote agent station from a call center, comprising steps of:

15 (a) implementing a dial-up data link between a computer platform at the remote agent station and a CTI processor connected to a telephony switch at the call center, wherein enabling the data link includes a log-in procedure, and wherein once established, the connection may be renewed after being broken by a reduced log-in procedure;

20 (b) receiving incoming calls at the call center;

20 (c) determining to switch a selected one of the incoming calls to an agent at the remote agent station;

25 (d) placing a call from the call center to a telephone at the remote agent station via a telephone line connected to the telephone;

25 (e) detecting the incoming call by a TAPI-compliant device connected to the computer platform at the remote agent station and to the telephone line to the telephone at the remote agent station, initiating thereby a dial up of the data link with the reduced log-in procedure;

30 (f) switching the selected incoming call to the remote agent station;

30 (g) retrieving data associated with the selected incoming call from a database at the call center; and

(h) forwarding the data associated with the selected incoming call to the computer platform at the remote agent station via the open data link.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the CTI processor at the call center and the computer platform at the remote agent station each have a modem connected by a telephony line to a telephony network, and in step (e) the data link is established by the computer platform dialing up the CTI processor through the telephony network.

10. The method of claim 9 wherein the telephony network is a publicly-switched telephony network..

11. The method of claim 8 wherein the CTI processor at the call center is adapted as an Internet server, and in step (a) the data link is established by the computer platform at the remote agent station dialing up an Internet service provider and establishing an Internet connection to the CTI processor.

12. The method of claim 8 wherein, in step (h), the data forwarded is displayed as a screen pop on a video display connected to the computer platform at the remote agent station.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein the screen pop includes a script for the agent at the remote agent station.

14. The method of claim 8 wherein first control routines executing at the CTI processor and second control routines executing at the computer platform at the remote agent station are adapted to cooperate over the data link to provide call center services to the agent at the remote agent station.

15. A method for establishing a remote agent station from a call center having a CTI processor connected by CTI link to a telephony switch, comprising steps of:

- (a) receiving incoming calls at the call center;
- (b) determining to switch a selected one of the incoming calls to an agent at the remote agent station;
- 5 (c) dialing a modem at a computer platform at the remote agent station by a modem connected to the CTI processor, establishing thereby a data connection between the computer platform at the remote agent station and the CTI processor;
- (d) placing a call from the call center to a telephone at the remote agent station via a telephone line connected to the telephone;
- (e) switching the selected incoming call to the remote agent station;
- (f) retrieving data associated with the selected incoming call from a database at the call center; and
- 15 (g) forwarding the data associated with the selected incoming call to the computer platform at the remote agent station via the open data link.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein the telephony network is a publicly-switched telephony network..
17. The method of claim 15 wherein, in step (g), the data forwarded is displayed as a screen pop on a video display connected to the computer platform at the remote agent station.
- 20 18. The method of claim 17 wherein the screen pop includes a script for the agent at the remote agent station.
- 25 19. The method of claim 15 wherein first control routines executing at the CTI processor and second control routines executing at the computer platform at the remote agent station are adapted to cooperate over the data link to provide call center services to the agent at the remote agent station.
- 30 20. A home agent call center system, comprising:

a telephony switch connected to a first trunk adapted for receiving incoming calls from a telephony network, and to a second trunk adapted for placing outbound calls into the network;

5 a computer telephony integration (CTI) processor connected to the telephony switch and to a data base, the CTI processor executing a CTI application;

an agent station remote from the call center, the agent station having a telephone connected by a first telephony line to the telephony network and a computer platform with a video display unit (PC/VDU) connected by a second telephony line through a modem to the telephony network; and

10 a data port associated with the CTI processor adapted to establish a data connection;

wherein a data connection is established between the CTI processor and the computer station at the remote agent station, and as incoming calls are switched to the remote agent station, data pertaining to each incoming call is retrieved from the data base and sent via the open data link to the computer platform at the remote agent station to be displayed on the VDU.

15 21. The system of claim 20 wherein the data connection is established prior to a first call being switched to the remote agent station, and is maintained open thereafter as further calls are switched to the remote agent station.

20 22. The system of claim 20 wherein the computer platform at the remote agent station is characterized by a TAPI-compliant device connected to the telephone such that the computer platform may detect incoming telephone calls, and wherein, upon detecting a call from the call center, the computer platform immediately dials up the CTI-processor and establishes the data link by a reduced log-in procedure allowing a minimum time connection.

25 30 23. The system of claim 20 wherein the CTI-processor is characterized by having a modem bank adapted to dial outgoing calls, and wherein, as a call is selected to be

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switched to the remote agent station, the modem bank dials the remote agent station and establishes the data connection.

24. The system of claim 20 wherein the telephony network is a publicly-switched telephony network.

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25. The system of claim 20 wherein the CTI-processor is adapted as an Internet-connected server, and the data link is established by the computer platform at the agent station dialing up an Internet service provider (ISP) and establishing an Internet link to the CTI-processor.

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